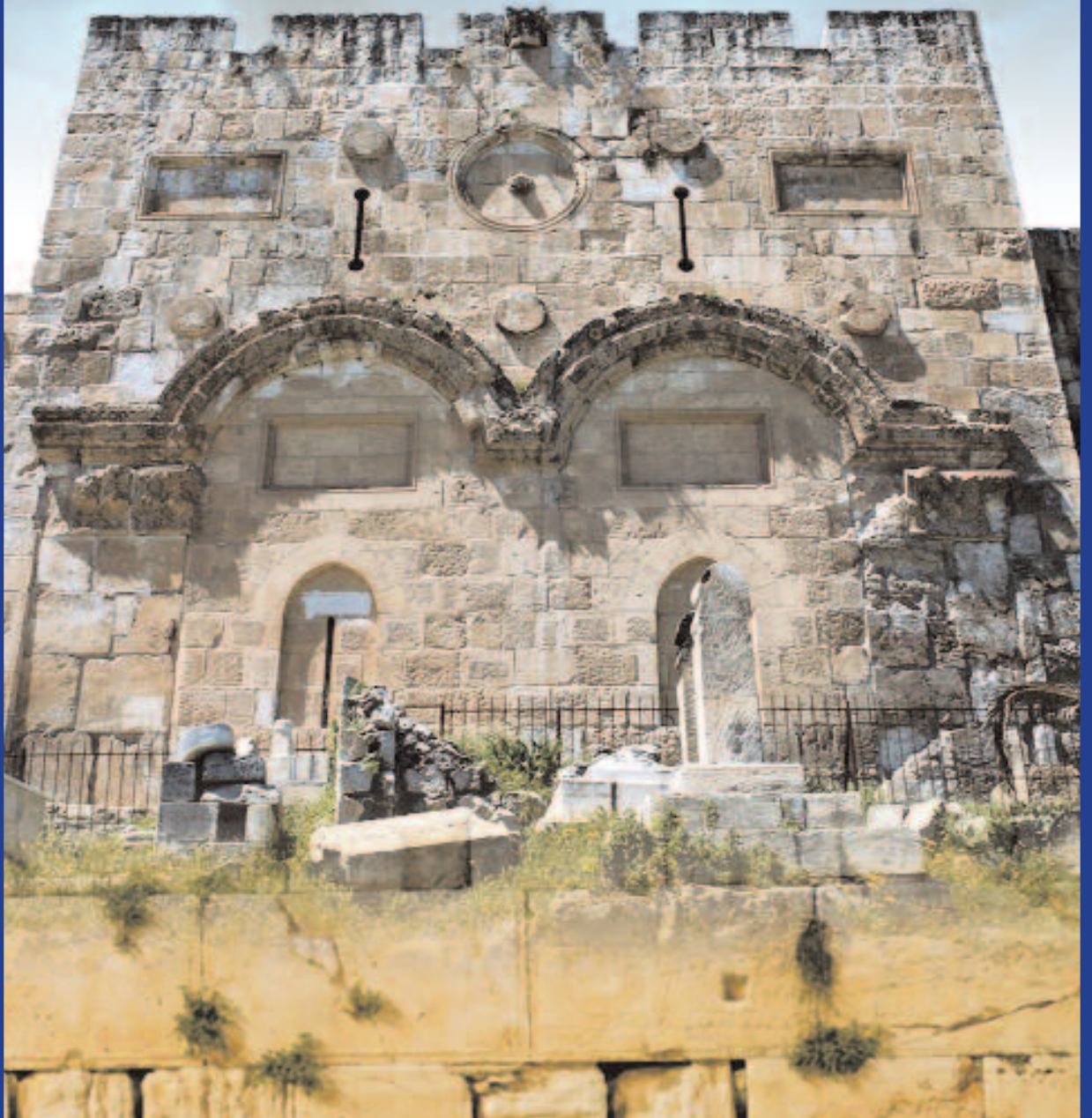

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

THE
ISRAELITES
THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL



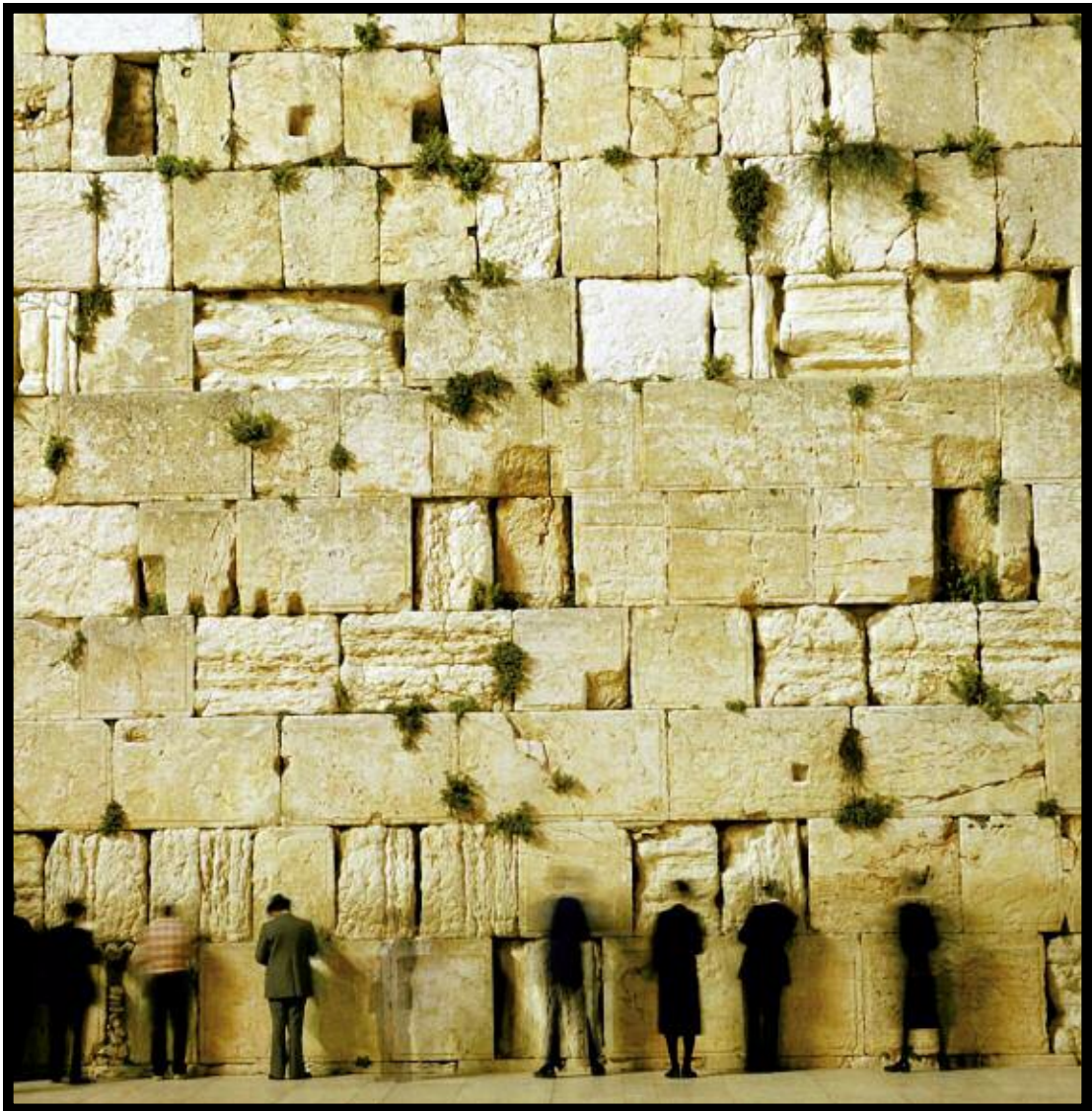
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ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

THE
ISRAELITES
THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

by
KATHERINE REECE



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Israelites praying at the sacred Wailing Wall in Jerusalem



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INTRODUCTION

“Israel, Palestine, Jordan, the West Bank... More conflict in the Middle East!” We hear news stories like these almost daily. Who are these people and why are they fighting? Israel is a small country not much bigger than the state of Rhode Island. How could such a tiny part of the world be the center of so many conflicts? What is the conflict about? To get an understanding of this part of the world we must take a look at its history. More than 10,000 years ago, some of the oldest known civilizations had their beginnings in this

A major source of conflict in Israel is the ownership of land. The property below that houses the Wailing Wall and the Dome of the Rock is a holy site to two cultures, and both have claims to it and other parts of Israel.





Many popular stories such as the one that tells of Adam and Eve find their origins in the history and religion of the Israelites.

region. Whole cities, kings, and armies had come and gone over this ancient landscape while people in North America were still wearing animal skins and using stone tools. Yet this tiny country, lying along the shores of the eastern Mediterranean Sea, gave birth to so much of what we take for granted in our thoughts and beliefs. Who hasn't heard the story of Noah and the Ark? Of Adam and Eve? These stories and many others like them are woven into the fabric of human history. Names we use today, such as David, Jonathan, Joseph, and Rachel, come from a civilization that is more than 5,000 years old!

WHO WERE THE ISRAELITES?

The modern country of Israel was created in 1948, when the United Nations divided ancient Palestine into Jewish Israel and Arab Jordan. But Israel had its beginnings in a region called **Canaan** in western Asia along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. As early as 3000 B.C.E., people known as Canaanites were forming communities or city-states, irrigating the land for crops, and settling in one place rather than roaming in search of food and water. By 2000 B.C.E. three major civilizations began to develop in the land of Canaan. The first, Phoenicians, settled in the northern section called Phoenicia. They became skilled navigators, sailors, and traders and built a trading empire that reached to distant lands. The second group, the “Hebrew People,” later became the Israelites. They settled around 1200 B.C.E. in the part of Canaan that later became known as Palestine. The third group of seafaring people, named “**Sea Peoples**” by Egyptians, drifted into an area that would become known as Philistine along the coast south of Palestine. These people, the Philistines, were often at war with the Israelites.

Palestine was at the center of trade routes linking Asia Minor, Egypt, present-day Syria, and Mesopotamia. As a result, Palestine was a meeting place for the exchange of religious and cultural ideas. Palestine is the Holy Land described in the Bible.

A view of the location of the modern country of Israel with its coast along the Mediterranean Sea



DISPUTED TERRITORY

Much of the fighting in Israel has been over land ownership. The area known as ancient Palestine consists of the modern countries of Israel and Jordan. This land has been occupied by various civilizations, at different times throughout history. Today, many Palestinian Arabs also have a claim to the land and want a country of their own called Palestine.



Abram leading his family

Our knowledge of the Israelites comes from Egyptian writings, the stories of the **Bible**, and **archaeology**. From the earliest times, the story of the Israelites is closely linked to the promise of land by their god, **Yahweh**, and the biblical stories of their travels.

The story of the Israelites begins with Abram, a shepherd from the Sumerian city of Ur in Mesopotamia. Abram and his people were nomads who carried their belongings and trade goods on the backs of donkeys, while traveling from city to city. They eventually settled on a fertile strip of land bordering the Mediterranean Sea in the land of Canaan, around 1950 B.C.E.

(Below left) much of what we know about ancient Israel comes from the work of archaeologists. (Below right) a camel loaded with its owner's belongings has been a common way of travel since ancient times.





After wrestling with an angel Jacob's name was changed to Israel.

Abram had a son named Isaac, which means "laughter." Isaac's second son and Abram's grandson was named Jacob, and he had 12 sons, after which the 12 tribes of Israel are named.

"EXALTED FATHER"

Israelites believe they are descended from a shepherd named Abram ("exalted father").

Abram said that God directed him to take his family to the land of Canaan. Abram's grandson, Jacob ("the grabber"), wrestled with an angel and won. His name was then changed to Israel ("striver with God").

From his name comes the name of the country, Israel, and its citizens, the Israelites.



The youngest of these sons, Joseph, was sold by his brothers into slavery in Egypt. Eventually he rose in power and became second only to the **Pharaoh** in all of Egypt. Drought and famine persisted in Canaan, and his brothers looked for help in Egypt, where there was plenty of food and land. Joseph forgave his brothers, and their families relocated to Egypt. The “Children of Israel” probably lived in the land of Egypt for several hundred years.





This illustration is a reproduction of wall paintings taken from an Egyptian tomb. It shows Canaanites being introduced into an Egyptian court as Joseph's brothers may have been brought before him.

After many years, Ramses II, the Egyptian Pharaoh, began to feel threatened by the growing population of Israelites. To manage them, Ramses II forced the Israelites into slavery and servitude. As a further attempt to control the Israelite population, the Pharaoh ordered that all male children of the Israelites be put to death.



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall make no graven images.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not testify falsely against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet anything your neighbor has.

One child, named Moses, was taken in by the Pharaoh's daughter and raised as a member of Ramses' household. When he learned of his true heritage as an Israelite, Moses believed that he was to lead the Israelites back to the **Promised Land** in Canaan. After many years under the leadership of Moses, the Israelites came to rest at Mount Sinai. It was at Mount Sinai that Moses called on the Israelites to make a **covenant**, or agreement, with their god, Yahweh. In the Biblical record, this is where the Israelites received the **Ten Commandments**, which was a set of laws for religious and moral behavior.



After 40 years, the Israelites finally crossed the Jordan River and entered the land of Canaan. There, the 12 Tribes of Israel formed the Kingdom of Israel.



Map showing the areas controlled by each of the 12 Tribes of Israel

(Above) the Jordan River is a holy river to more than one culture.



LAND OF CANAAN

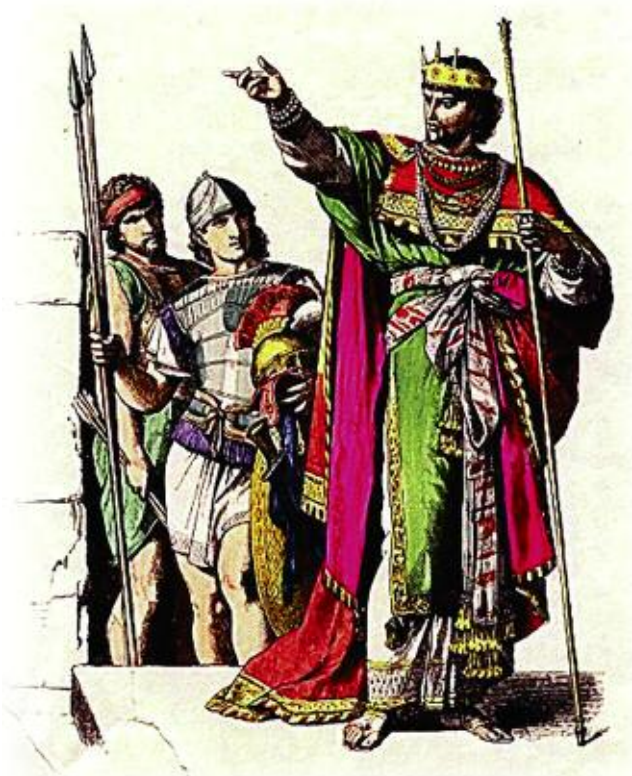
Most of the land of Canaan, later called Palestine, was held by the 12 Tribes of Israel. The names of the tribes were Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gad, Issachar, Judah, Manasseh, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon, and Zebulun.

THE UNITED MONARCHY

To regain the lands they had left behind during the time of Abram, the returning Israelites fought the Philistines who were then living there, for nearly 200 years. The first governors of Israel were both judges and military leaders. The Israelites demanded a king, but they did not want an absolute **monarch**. They wanted their king to obey the laws of the **Torah** and to be tried by a group called the **sanhedrin** if the laws were broken. The sanhedrin was similar to today's supreme court of Israel. It was made up of 71

sages, or wise men, who had received **semicha**, or a holy direction from God, and knew the laws of the Torah.

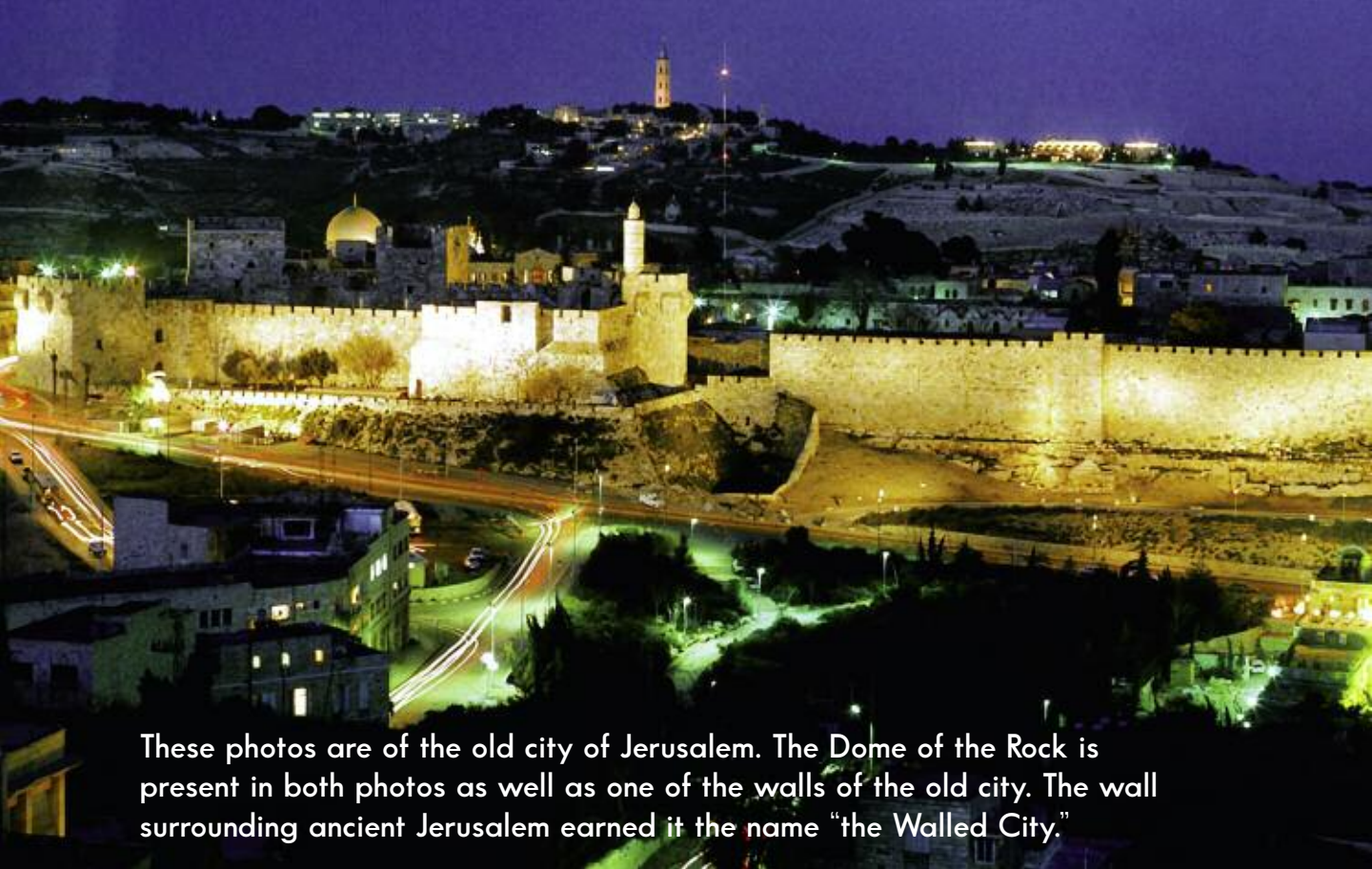
Israel was first governed by judges or military leaders. Saul was the first king of Israel but it was not until David came to power that the 12 Tribes were united under one ruler.





King David was a shepherd boy who killed the Philistine known as Goliath. He gained the favor of the king and rose in power to become one the most powerful of Israel's kings.

Israel prospered under King Saul, the land's first king, and later under King David. David became king in approximately 1004 B.C.E. and was able to finally defeat the Philistines and unite the 12 Tribes of Israel. He was able to expand his empire from the Sinai Desert and Gulf of Aqaba into southern Syria. The Kingdom of Israel became the strongest power between the Nile and Euphrates rivers.



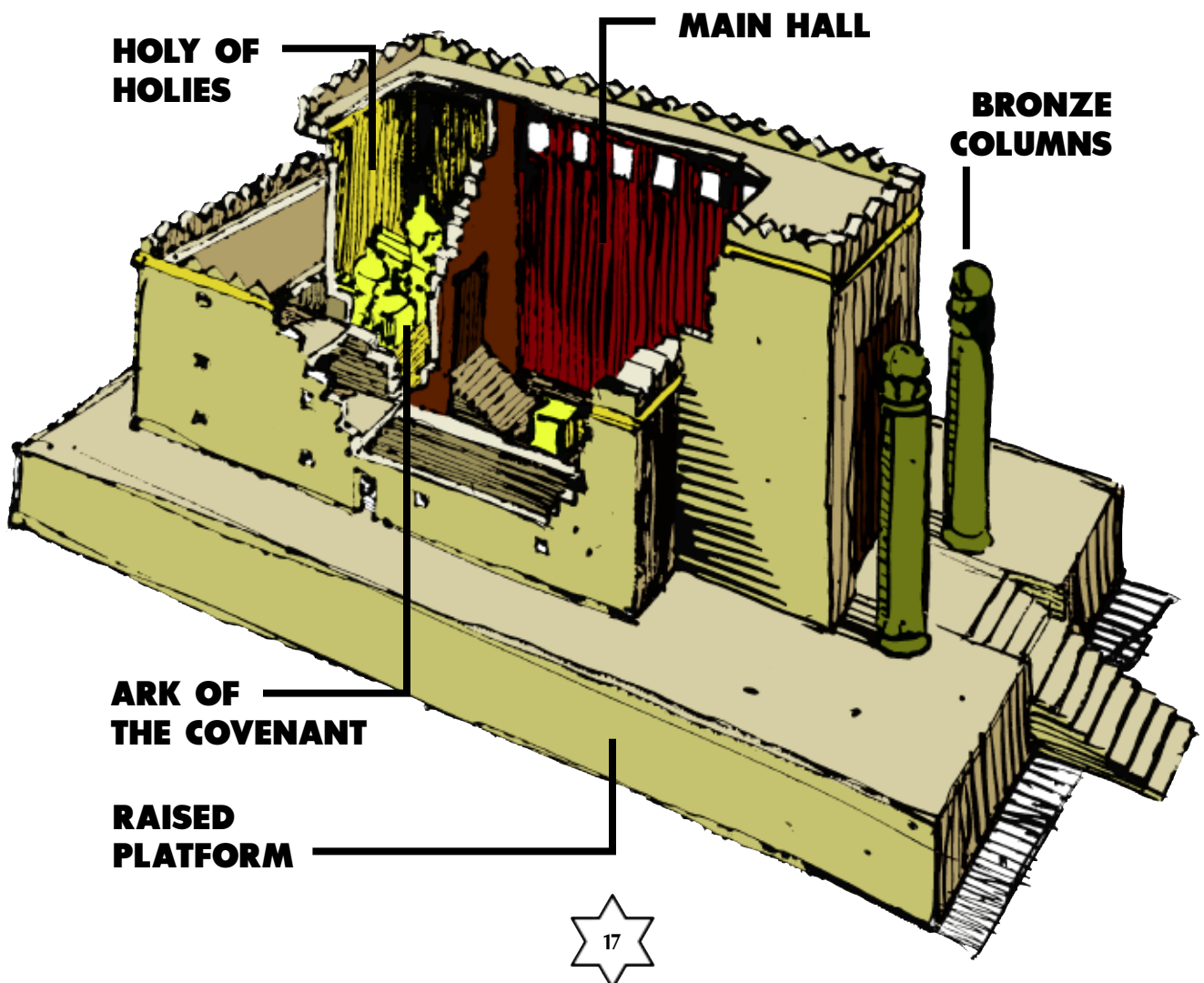
These photos are of the old city of Jerusalem. The Dome of the Rock is present in both photos as well as one of the walls of the old city. The wall surrounding ancient Jerusalem earned it the name “the Walled City.”

King David built a capital in Jerusalem after taking the city from the Canaanites in 1000 B.C.E. The location of Jerusalem was perfect, since it was not the home of any one tribe. The Israelites believed Yahweh was present in Jerusalem, and the city became the religious center for the Israelites. They also believed that their king was the “Son of Yahweh.”



The Kingdom of Israel reached its greatest period of wealth and peace under King David's son, Solomon, who ruled between 965 and 928 B.C.E. King Solomon divided the kingdom into 12 districts and developed a system of law. King Solomon is known for his wisdom and sense of fairness, but he also introduced high taxes and forced men to work on public projects such as palaces, fortresses, and the Temple of Jerusalem.

The design and interior of the Temple of Jerusalem



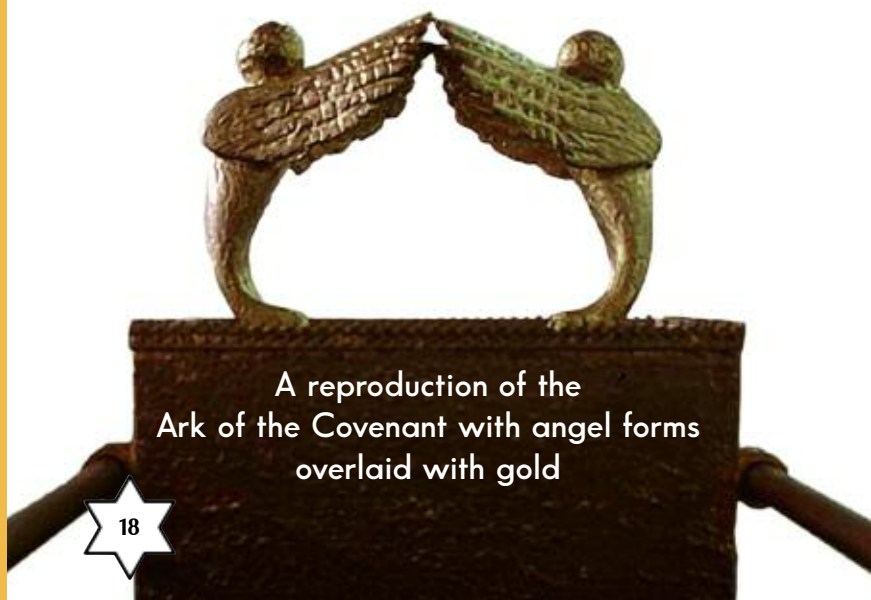
TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM AND ARK OF THE COVENANT

The Temple of Jerusalem was a place of pilgrimage and worship. It stood as a fortified enclosure with many decorations and furnishings. Priests directed music and worship. Animal sacrifices were made in the temple. The Ten Commandments, as given to Moses, were kept in the Ark of the Covenant within the Temple.



The Dome of the Rock sits on the same spot where the Temple of Jerusalem once stood.

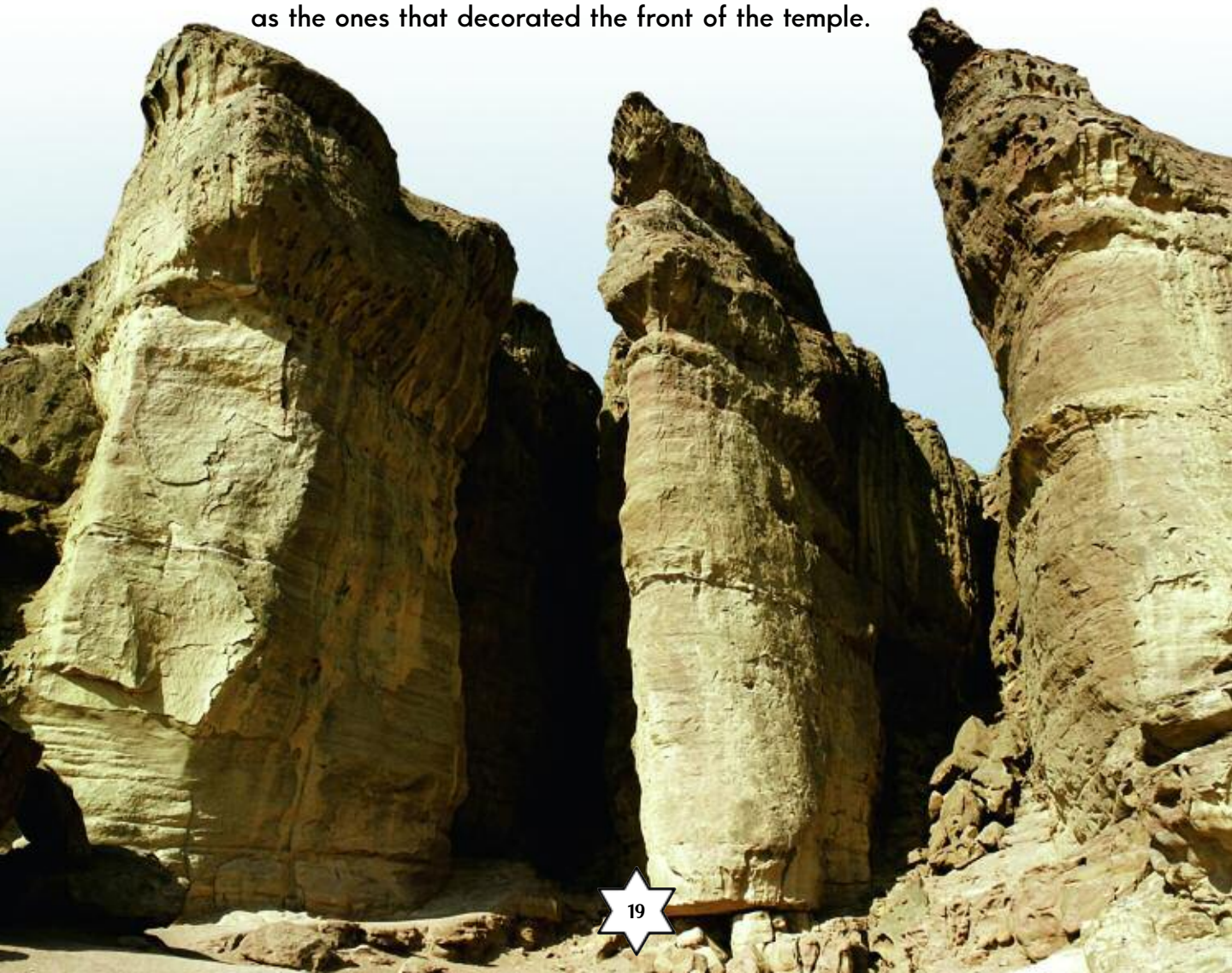
The Temple of Jerusalem was not large, but it was richly decorated. The **Ark of the Covenant** was housed here and guarded by two winged sphinxes, or **kerubim** in animal form. All religious festivals were celebrated in the temple, and animal sacrifices were offered there.



A reproduction of the
Ark of the Covenant with angel forms
overlaid with gold

After Solomon's death, the kingdom split into two sections—Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Jeroboam, one of Solomon's early military leaders, was elected to rule Israel, while Solomon's son, Rehoboam, continued the dynasty of King David in Judah. In addition to conflicts within the Divided Kingdoms, the Israelites once again had fights with neighboring empires. Although weakened by conflicts, Israel began to regain its power in 786 B.C.E.

Solomon's Pillars were the location of an ancient Egyptian copper mine. They were named after the king because of his association with pillars such as the ones that decorated the front of the temple.



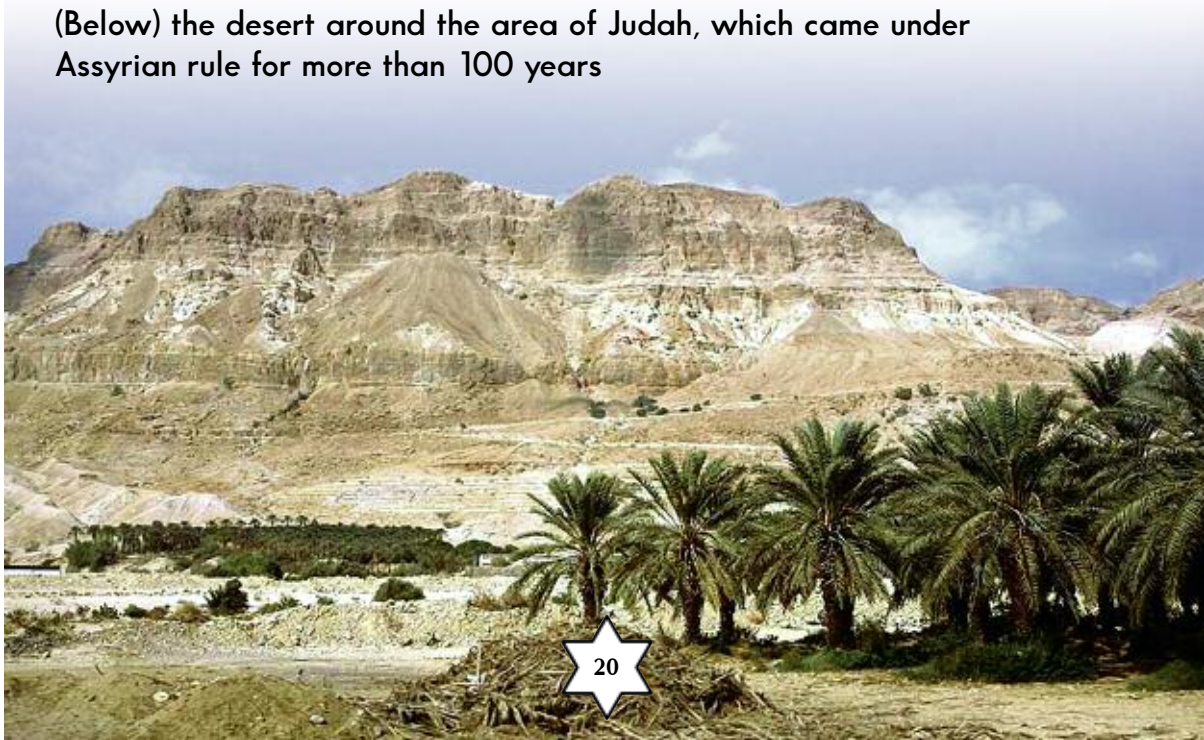
WARS AND CONQUESTS



The Assyrians invaded the land of Canaan many times over the years and demanded that their new territories pay high taxes. By 721 B.C.E. the Assyrians had captured Israel and the northern kingdom, and 20 years later they captured the southern kingdom of Judah. Judah became a **vassal** of the Egyptian empire in 609 B.C.E. and a **tributary** to

(Above) an Israelite archer in traditional military dress

(Below) the desert around the area of Judah, which came under Assyrian rule for more than 100 years

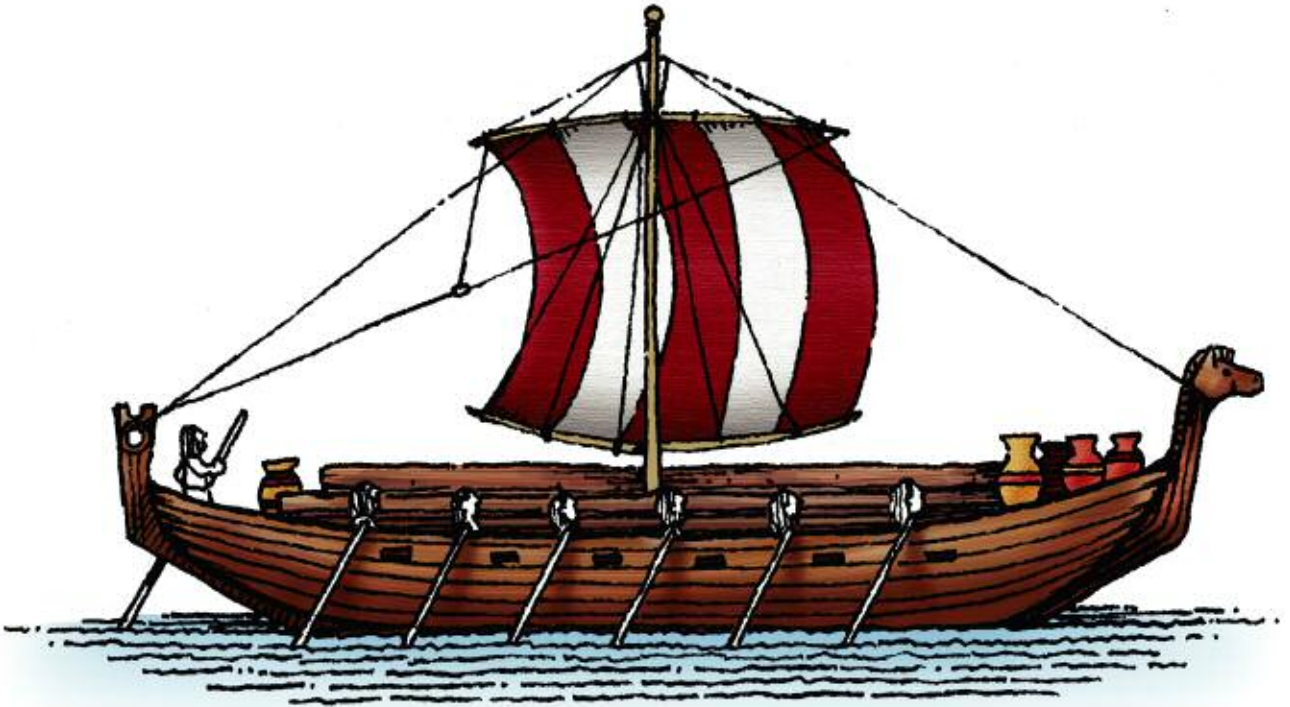




Etching of an Israelite family during the captivity in Babylon. Their Babylonian master stands over them and appears to be issuing a command.

Babylon in 597 B.C.E. Tiring of the constant rebellions, King Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia captured and burned Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E., and the Israelites were taken captive as slaves and forced to live in Babylon. About 50 years later, Cyrus the Great of Persia captured Babylon. He allowed the Israelites to return home and rebuild their temple. Although Israel was now a Persian province, the Israelites were finally able to live once again in their homeland.

TRADE BY LAND AND SEA



In ships built and manned by Phoenicians, King Solomon's Red Sea Fleet sailed every three years to Africa and Arabia. After being gone for more than a year, the ships returned, carrying gold, precious stones, **sandalwood** for making harps and lyres, spices, ivory, and even apes and baboons to amuse the royalty.

(Right) baboons were only one of many exotic animals and products shipped abroad on large ocean ships (above) built by the Phoenicians.





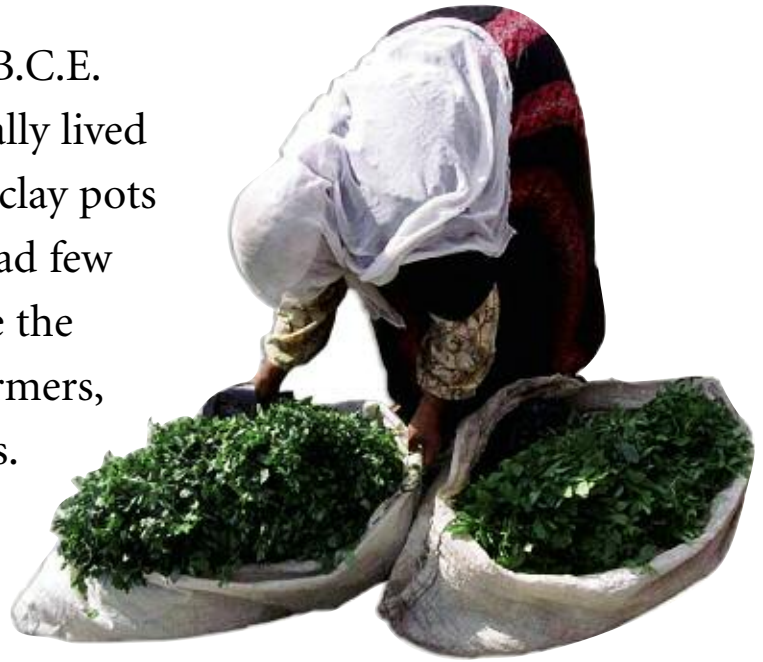
Many goods were also shipped overland through Palestine by traveling caravans. This merchandise traveled as far as Mesopotamia and Turkey.

Overland trade also grew and soon caravans were traveling to Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt. Israel was centrally located for the exchange of goods between countries. Palestine bought chariots in Egypt and sold them to Hittites and **Aramaeans**. Horses from Cilicia, which is now Turkey, were exchanged far and wide.



DAILY LIFE IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

The Israelites in 1200 B.C.E. worked hard and generally lived modestly. Besides a few clay pots for everyday use, they had few items of luxury. Outside the cities men worked as farmers, fishermen, or carpenters. Work days were long, with both men and women working 10 to 12 hours a day.



An Israeli woman gathering greens into bags, just one of many tasks in a long work day

Women cooked, gathered wood and **dung** for fuel, while caring for the children. A woman might be seen balancing a bundle of brush five times her size on her head. By the age of 13, children were expected to work long hours, and even small children had their share of family chores. In this desert environment, water was scarce and several trips a day to the deeply dug wells were necessary to supply water for the family and its livestock.

The hillsides of Palestine were too steep for traditional farming, so the Israelites invented terraced farming. They lined the hillsides with stone walls supported by soil and rubble. Filled in with dirt, farmers on the terraces grew a variety of crops.

Wheat and barley were grown and used in making bread and beer. Olive, fig, almond, and pomegranate trees provided shade as well as food and cooking oils. Other important crops were grapes, beans, and lentils. Cattle, sheep, and goats were raised for meat, but eating meat was mostly reserved for festivals and religious celebrations.

Many exotic foods such as pomegranate fruit (above right), or olives (below) were grown using terraced farming (below right).



The Israelites would stack rough stones and mud bricks to form the walls of their houses, which had dirt floors. Branches, wood beams, and brush formed the roofs. Typically homes were small, about 30-36 feet (9-12 m) long and 24-33 feet (7-10 m) wide. They usually had four rooms divided by pillars, instead of walls. Common people used mats on the floor as their beds, but wealthier Israelites might have wooden beds and a couch, as well as a table and chairs inlaid with ivory from Phoenicia. Some homes had a

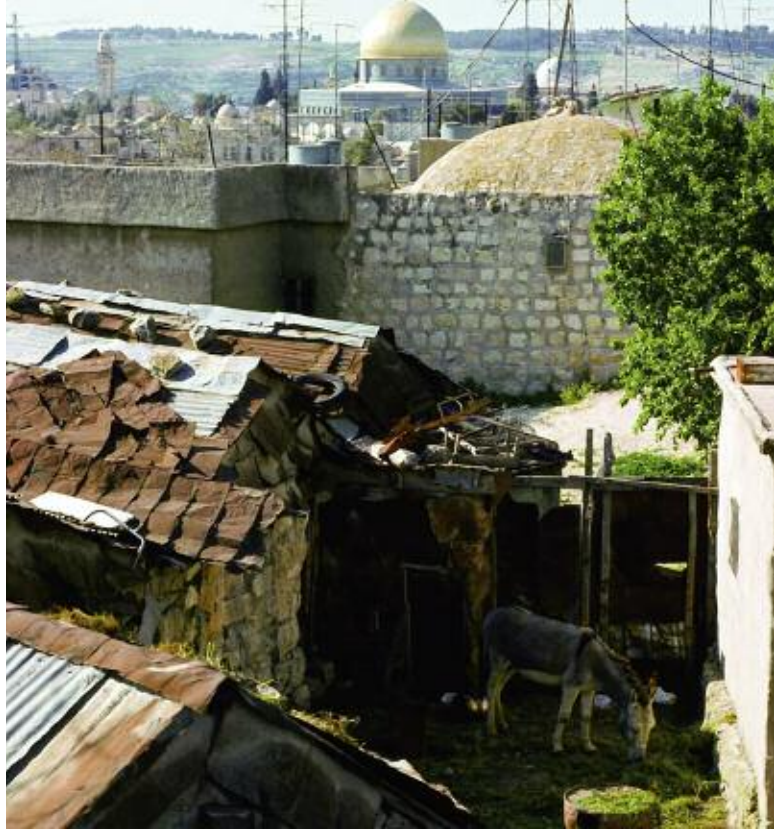


second floor with an outside stairway that led to the roof. During extremely hot weather families would sleep on the rooftops and use them to dry certain foods.

Many homes did not have their own wells, so bathing and laundry were done at public pools such as this one.

Houses were grouped around a central courtyard, where domed ovens could be seen. Rural villages were mostly made up of families related to each other. In this **patriarchal** society, the oldest male was head of the household.

Parents might share the home with their son and his wife and children. They also shared the living space with donkeys, cows, goats, and sheep. In the winter, the livestock helped heat the rooms, and their dung could be used as fuel.



A donkey pen would have been attached to the main branch of the house, such as this one in modern Jerusalem



An oil lamp was one of the few items of luxury available to most households.

WHAT DID THE ISRAELITES WEAR?



Israelite women wove cloth and made clothing for the entire family. Sitting at their looms, the women and girls made cloth from sheep's wool, goat hair, flax, and endash, a fibrous plant used in making linen.



(Above)
wool thread wound
over a spool is ready
to be woven into cloth.

(Right) these flowers come from the flax plant,
which was also used to produce linen for clothing.

Men wore a top similar to a modern T-shirt and a knee-length, wraparound skirt. The skirt had a fringed sash that was tied at the waist and was used for carrying weapons and valuables. In cold weather, men added a sleeved cloak that could also double as a blanket. They wore their hair short, covered by a turban. A priest, king, or wealthy nobleman was more likely to have a full beard, a floppy cap, and a long robe with a fringed hem.

An Israelite priest, or rabbi, in traditional religious dress holds a ram's horn and a scroll containing holy writings.



Israelite noblemen in traditional dress



Women wore tunics or cloaks over a long, sleeveless dress. A long, colorful scarf completed her outfit, framing her face and reaching to the hem. Wealthier women wore colored eye paint, hoop-shaped earrings, and rings on their fingers and toes. A woman might use bronze curlers to set her hair, which was left to grow long.

Israelite noblewomen in traditional dress. The rich colors of the clothing and jewelry show that these women were of the wealthy class.



WHAT DID THE ISRAELITES EAT?

Women spent long hours preparing meals. Bread was the main food, and every year each Israelite is believed to have eaten 300-440 pounds (150-200 kg) of wheat and barley in the form of bread! Wheat and barley had to be gathered, threshed, and ground into flour, using stone tools. Mixed with yeast, olive oil, and spices, the bread was then baked in courtyard ovens. Some bread was made without yeast as part of religious ceremonies.

(Below left) loaves of bread are still sold in the open markets of Israel.

(Below right) an ancient olive press made of stone, where olives were crushed, the juice extracted, and made into olive oil.



MAKING BREAD

An Israelite girl spent hours making bread. First, she crushed wheat or barley grains with a heavy stone to make flour. Then she mixed the flour with water, yeast, and perhaps oil and salt. Then she kneaded the bread and shaped it into loaves. She built a fire in a fire pit or oven, using animal dung and branches for fuel. Finally, she set the loaves into the oven to bake. She did this every day except for the Sabbath.



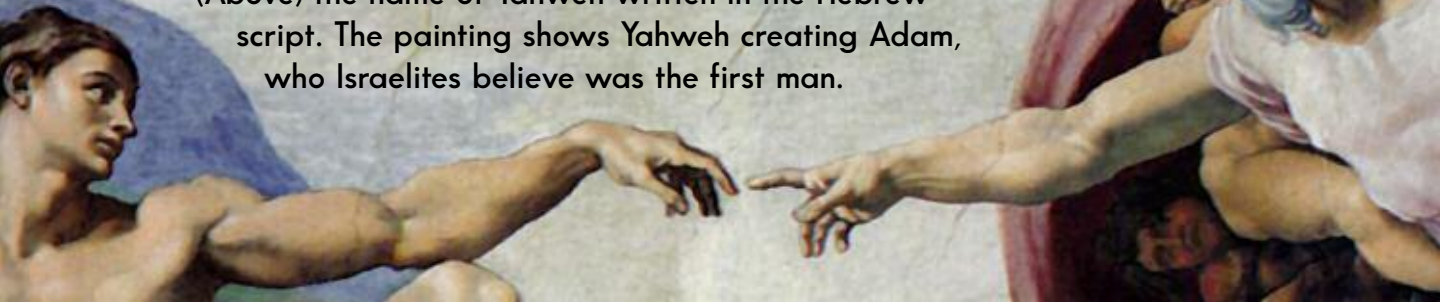
Jugs like these would have been used to hold olive oil.

The Israelites ate meat from sheep, goats, or calves, but it was considered a special food for holidays or ceremonies. They also hunted **ibex**, deer, and antelope. While wild pigs were available, the Israelites' beliefs prevented them from eating them. Israelites enjoyed fruit such as pomegranates, figs, dates, raisins, and grapes. They also grew and ate vegetables such as beans, peas, chickpeas, onions, lettuce, and cucumbers. Butter, cheese, milk, and yogurt from goats, cows, and sheep were a part of their daily meal, and these were flavored with olive oil, vinegar, herbs, and spices. In addition they made beer, wine, and grape juice.

RELIGION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

יהוה

(Above) the name of Yahweh written in the Hebrew script. The painting shows Yahweh creating Adam, who Israelites believe was the first man.



The Ten Commandments were rules for everyday behavior. The first five books of the Bible, known as the Torah, make up the basis for **Judaism**. One of the commandments said that there would be no other god before Yahweh. This was a rare belief in ancient times. Other civilizations believed in many gods that shared equal status. Israelites believed in the existence of other gods, but only worshiped one. For instance, **Baal** was regarded as the god of farming, agriculture, order, abundance, and new life. Many centuries passed before the Israelites held Yahweh as the one and only god of the entire universe.



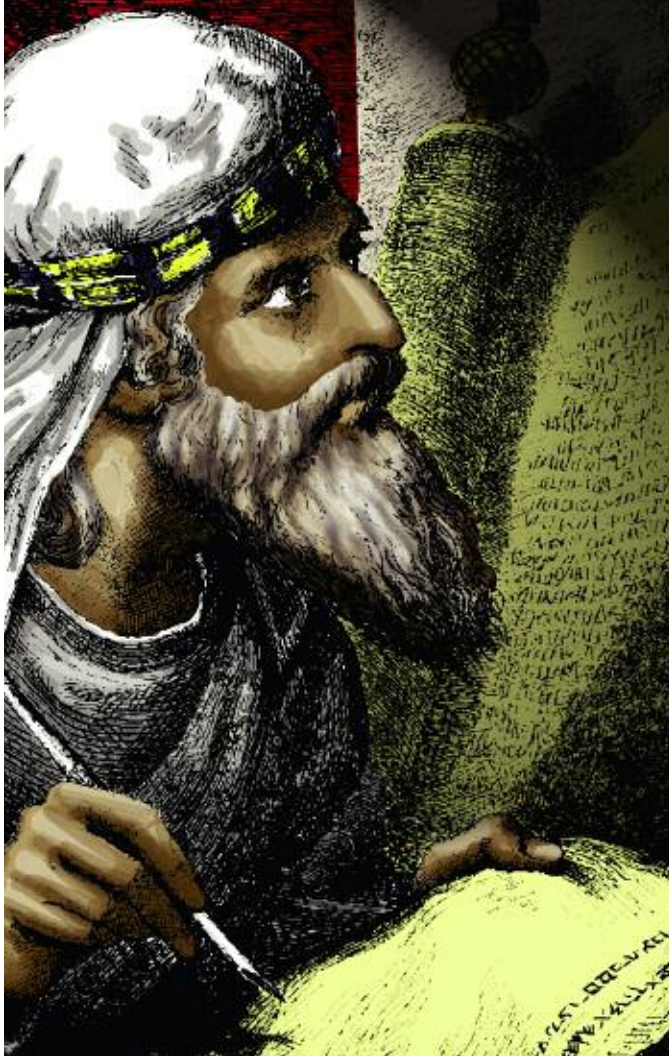
SACRIFICES

Sacrifices were burned on altars with four raised corners called “horns.” These may have helped keep the offering from falling off. As a part of the ritual, the priest dabbed blood on the right ear, right thumb, and right big toe of the person who brought the animal for the sacrifice.

In the temple, the priest’s most important duty was to prepare sacrifices—a cow, goat, sheep, or bird, for example—and offer it as a sacrifice to Yahweh on behalf of the Israelite people. Baked goods, incense, and wine were also common offerings. Since the people also worshiped Baal, Astarte, and other Phoenician gods, sacrifices were also made to these gods on nearby mountaintops. Other men, who were not official priests, would interpret religious law, settle disputes, and sentence those who had broken the law.

The most common sacrifices at the temple were goats and sheep.





(Left) the Israelite prophet named Ezra, who is believed to have written one of the books of the Bible.

(Below) ancient clay jars like this one, which stands 2 ft (.6 m) high, have been found to contain parts of some books of the Bible that may be more than 2,000 years old.

As a nation, the Israelites believed that one of the harshest punishments was to be attacked by its enemies. **Prophets** or Seers had warned the Israelite people of these terrible events, and it was only during the Babylonian Captivity that Israelites started to believe in Yahweh as the creator of the universe.





Reading from the Holy Texts or Torah became a tradition during the Babylonian Captivity.

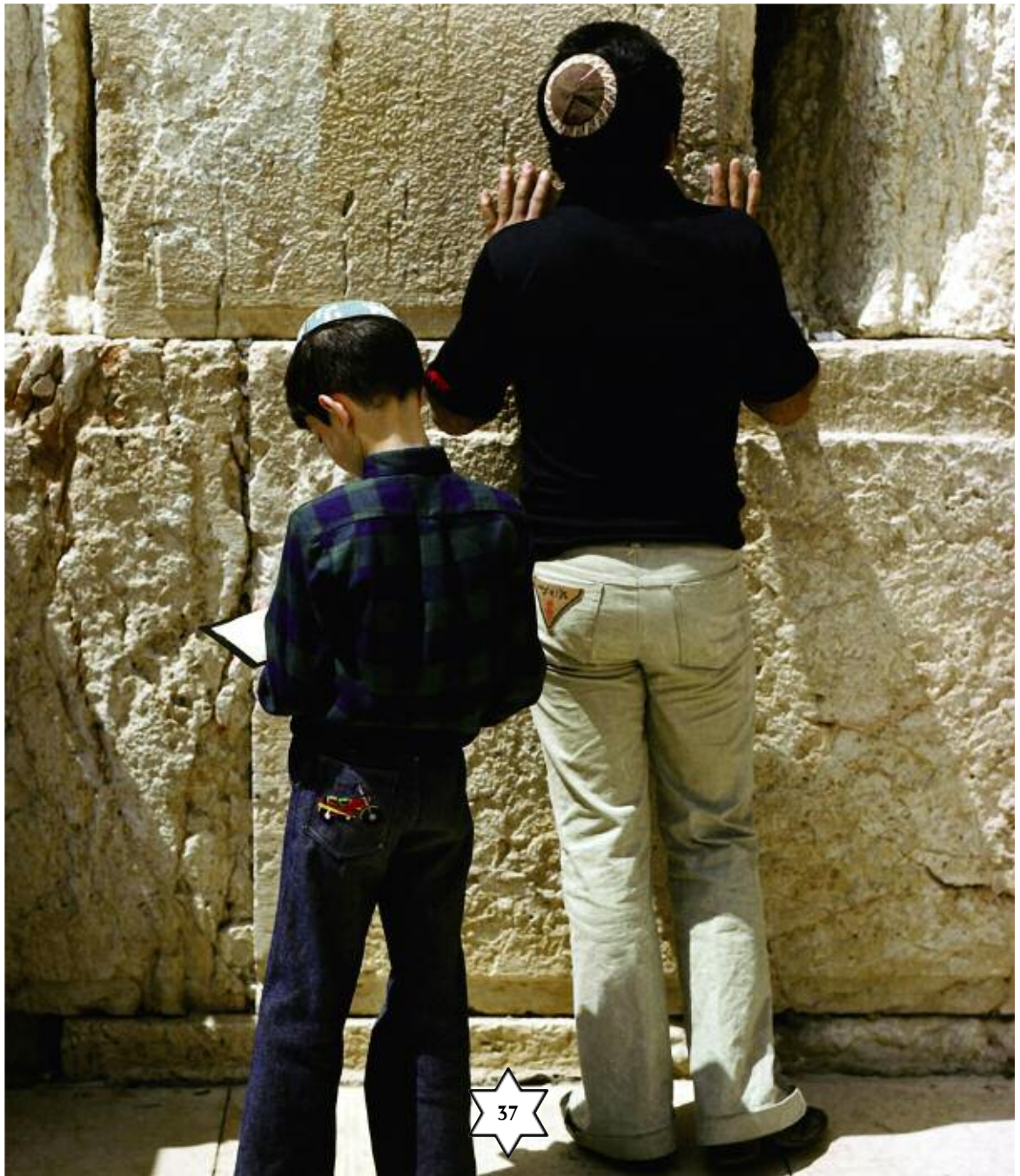
When the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed and the Israelites were taken as slaves into Babylon, there was no place for them to conduct their sacrifices. The Israelites learned new religious practices such as celebrating the **Sabbath** and reading from the Holy Texts. All work had to be finished in six days and on the seventh day, the Sabbath Day, no work could be done, while the people rested and prayed.



(Left) the high priest of the temple, in traditional dress and with ornaments from the temple.

(Right) Israeli youths praying at the “Wailing Wall,” which is the last remaining part of the original Temple in Jerusalem

Israelites gave up their belief in many gods to become **monotheistic**. Religious prophets had always emphasized the sacredness of Jerusalem as the earthly dwelling place of Yahweh. These prophets taught that only by trusting in and relying on Yahweh's promises could the Israelites live forever on their promised land.



CHAPTER IX:

THE PEOPLE TODAY

In 1948, after centuries of wars and conflicts, the United Nations divided ancient Palestine into the Jewish State of Israel and the Arab Country of Jordan. But the conflicts between the Arab Palestinians and the Nation of Israel continue today, with each having sacred claims on the land. For the Israeli people it is difficult to separate these claims from their Biblical history or their lands. Palestinian refugees are living separated from the historical sites and lands that they believe are rightfully theirs as well.

(Below) the ancient symbol “the Star of David,” named for the Israelite king, decorates the modern flag of Israel.





This photo shows the development of a modern city and rich farmland along the borders of the Sea of Galilee.

Today Israel is a small country on a narrow strip of land on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The diverse landscape includes seashores, mountains, valleys, and deserts. The country's main regions are the Coastal Plain, the Judeo-Galilean Highlands, the Rift Valley, and the Negev Desert. Israel's total area is 8,550 square miles (22,145 sq km), which includes parts of the **Gaza** Strip, Sinai Peninsula, and Golan Heights. These are called "occupied territories," because Israeli settlers have gradually moved into these areas, although they are not officially part of Israel.

Approximately 6,631,000 people live in Israel, including 207,800 Israeli settlers in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) and about 7,300 in the Gaza Strip. Ninety per cent of the people live in cities with modern buildings and apartments. Jerusalem remains the capital and spiritual center of Israel, while the nation's commercial, financial, and industrial center is Tel Aviv.

Ten percent of the population still lives in rural areas in a Kibbutz, or a cooperative called a Moshav. Members of a Kibbutz provide labor in exchange for food, housing, education, and medical care. Within a Moshav, each family is more independent, with separate farming land and living quarters, but the village provides the equipment and supplies.

The United Nations action in 1948 created Israel as a homeland for Jewish people throughout the world. Israel is once again the spiritual home for the **Jewish** people, and four out of five Israelites are Jewish. Israel is open to any person born of a Jewish mother or anyone who has converted to Judaism and is not a member of another religion. Since becoming a nation in 1948, approximately

2.5 million Jews have immigrated to Israel from all parts of the world.



The Ein Gedi is a modern Kibbutz near the Dead Sea. The members of this community help their neighbors with labor, food, and other needs. Working together, the people maintain the beautiful gardens seen here.



Modern Israeli Arabs bargain during the sale of livestock.

One in five citizens of Israel are Arab. The Arabs live in their own farming villages or neighborhoods. Jews and Arabs have limited contact with each other and some members of the communities are suspicious of one another. Their children go to separate schools, speak separate languages, and follow different cultural traditions.

This Arab vendor sells his products in a local market. While many factors still separate the cultures of this land, the daily lifestyles hold many things in common.



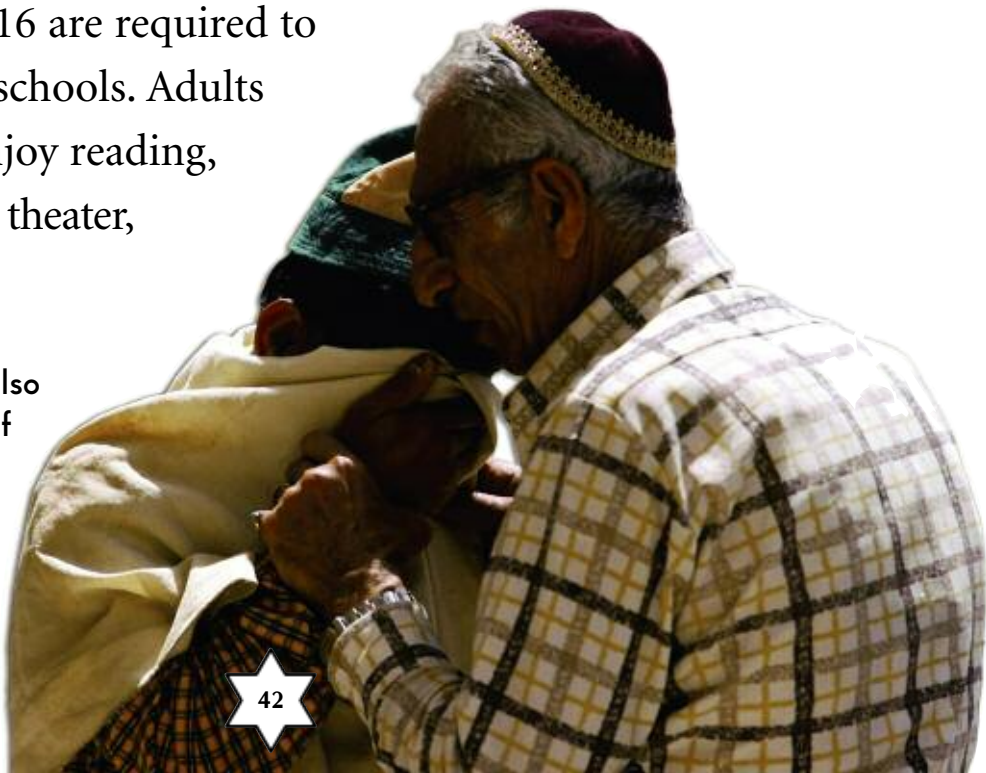


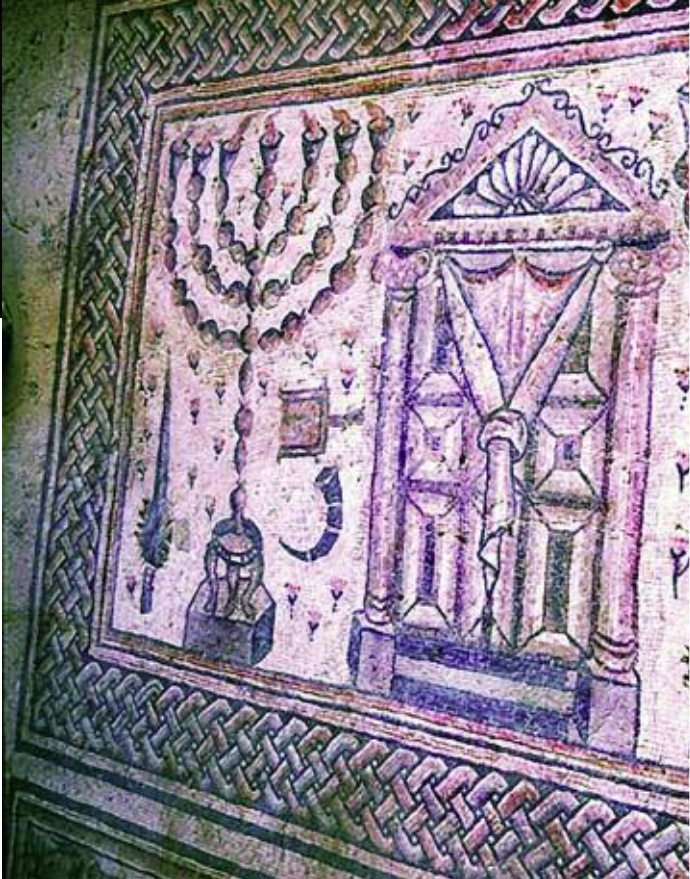
Fish are still a major part of the diet of many modern Israelis. These fish from the Sea of Galilee may be chopped into small pieces, mixed with egg and bread, and made into the dish called gefilte fish

In daily life, the modern mixes with the past. Palestinians wear mostly western clothing, while some wear the traditional clothing of their ethnic or religious groups. People eat both European and traditional Middle Eastern foods. One might find chopped liver, chicken soup, and **gefilte fish** for dinner, while on another table **falafel**, raw vegetables, and fruits are served. Turkish coffee, beer, cola, or wines are common beverages.

Education is considered very important, and all children between 5 and 16 are required to attend the free schools. Adults and children enjoy reading, music, dancing, theater, and museums.

Young Israelis are also taught the history of their religion from a young age. This father talks with his son during a religious ceremony.





This mosaic from a modern synagogue is decorated with symbols from the history and religion of the Israelites. (Right) this 8 ft (2.4 m) high marble statue of Moses was made by the classical artist Michelangelo, who lived from 1475 to 1564 C.E.

Much of what is seen in the arts draws on the history and religion of Israel. Even with its modern buildings and noisy traffic, a sense of ancient times continues. The many mosques, monuments, and sacred sites of this ancient landscape are constant reminders of the rich cultures that have influenced this land. Three of the world's major religions claim the land of Israel as the center of their faith. With so much history and such an unpredictable future, Israel will continue to be much as it always has been, the center of the world.

A TIMELINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES

1200 B.C.E.	Sea Peoples (Philistines) arrived in Middle East
1200 B.C.E.	Israelites begin settling in hill country of Canaan
1200-1020 B.C.E.	Period of Judges
1150 B.C.E.	Israelites arrive in Canaan
1020-928 B.C.E.	Period of United Monarchy with Kings Saul, David, and Solomon
1020-1004 B.C.E.	First King, Saul, rules Israel
1004-965 B.C.E.	David rules
965-928 B.C.E.	Solomon rules
950 B.C.E.	Solomon builds the Temple
928-721 B.C.E.	Period of Divided Kingdom and Kingdoms of Judah and Israel formed
928-907 B.C.E.	Jeroboam I rules Israel

928-911 B.C.E.	Rehoboam rules Judah
871-852 B.C.E.	Ahab rules Israel
841 B.C.E.	Jehu of Israel swears loyalty to Assyria
727-698 B.C.E.	Hezekiah rules Judah
721 B.C.E.	Assyria destroys Samaria and exiles northern Israelites
701 B.C.E.	Assyria destroys cities in Judah; Hezekiah defends Jerusalem
640 B.C.E.	Assyria withdraws from Canaan
640-605 B.C.E.	Egypt dominates Canaan
640-609 B.C.E.	Josiah rules Judah
622 B.C.E.	Josiah discovers scroll in Temple
612 B.C.E.	Babylonia conquers Assyria
597 B.C.E.	Babylonians temporarily occupy Judah
587 B.C.E.	Babylonia conquers Jerusalem
587-538 B.C.E.	Babylonian Exile
538 B.C.E.	Cyrus II of Persia defeats Babylonia, lets Israelites go home

GLOSSARY

Aramaeans: One of a group of Semitic peoples inhabiting Aram and parts of Mesopotamia from the 11th to the 8th century B.C.E. Aram is the biblical name for ancient Syria.

Archaeology: The study of past and present human cultures through the analysis of material remains such as architecture, artifacts, human remains, and landscapes.

Ark of the Covenant: A sacred chest where ancient Hebrews kept the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments.

Baal: Any of numerous local fertility and nature gods worshiped by ancient Semitic peoples. The Hebrews considered Baal a false god.

Bible: The principal writings of Judaism, comprising the Old Testament, and of Christianity, comprising both the Old and New Testaments.

Canaan: An ancient country in southwestern Asia on the east coast of the Mediterranean.

Covenant: A treaty or agreement.

Dung: Fecal matter of an animal.

Falafel: A small fried ball of mashed chickpeas or fava beans seasoned with sesame seeds.

Gaza: A coastal region at the southeastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea bordering Israel and Egypt. The region is currently under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

Gefilte fish: A ball of chopped fish mixed with egg, meal, and seasonings, boiled, and served chilled.

Ibex: Any of a variety of mountain goats of Eurasia and North Africa, especially those that have long, backward-curving horns.

Israel: An ancient kingdom of tribes, founded by Saul around 1025 B.C.E and destroyed by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E. and located at the southeastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. Modern-day Israel is in an area formerly part of Palestine.

Jewish: A term used to describe both followers of a religion and members of a group of

people. In a religious sense, the term refers to followers of Judaism. It also refers to those people who have joined the nation that traces its ancestry from the patriarch Abram through his son Isaac and in particular Jacob, the son of Isaac.

Judaism: The monotheistic religion of the Jews, having its spiritual and ethical principles written chiefly in the Torah and in the Talmud, the collection of ancient priests' writings on Jewish law and tradition that form the basis of religious authority in Orthodox Judaism.

Kerubim: An angel of God who is a messenger between man and god, or a guardian.

Monarch: A nation's ruler or head of state, usually by hereditary right.

Monotheistic: Believing that there is only one god.

Palestine: An area in southwestern Asia between the Jordan River and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Palestine is the area bordered by Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and the Mediterranean Sea. Palestine is not presently an independent political entity that is recognized by most of the international community. In biblical times, Palestine was the Jewish homeland, consisting of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Patriarchal: A society in which the oldest male is the leader of the family.

Pharaoh: A title used to refer to the kings (of godly status) in ancient Egypt.

Promised Land: In the Old Testament, the land of Canaan promised by God to Abram and his descendants.

Prophet: In the Old Testament, one chosen by God as a messenger and guide to the ancient Hebrews.

Sabbath: A day of rest and worship: Sunday for most Christians; Saturday for the Jews and a few Christians; Friday for Muslims.

Sandalwood: The highly fragrant, inner wood of certain evergreen trees native to India. The fragrant, yellowish heartwood of

Semites: A member of any of several peoples of southwestern Asia, including Hebrews and Arabs and, in ancient times included the Phoenicians and Assyrians.

Yahweh: A name for the God of the Old Testament as transliterated from the Hebrew consonants, YHWH.



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Katherine E. Reece is a native of Georgia, where she grew up in a small town located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. She has traveled throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Katherine completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in studio art at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado, where she now resides. Her extensive studies in art history gives her an appreciation for all that can be learned about the culture, beliefs, and traditions of ancient civilizations from the architecture, artifacts, and recordings that have been preserved through the centuries.

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On the Cover: Photo of the Mercy, or Golden, Gate. According to Jewish tradition, the Messiah or savior will enter Jerusalem through this gate. The gate was closed hundreds of years ago by non-Jewish rulers, and a cemetery placed in front to discourage this belief. The background is a detail from the Wailing Wall.

